

Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak for Senator Sarbanes' employees, and especially for my sister-in-law Nellie Freeman, who worked for Paul Sarbanes for 17 years, from December of 1989 to January of 2007.

I am not going to talk about all the amazing things about Senator Sarbanes that his Maryland colleagues have eloquently mentioned. JOHN, I am definitely not going to talk about fathers and sons because then I will start crying, but my dad, Sandy Levin, who served in this House for 36 years, and my Uncle Carl Levin, who served for 36 years in the Senate, many of them with Senator Sarbanes, both loved him very much.

But let me talk about Nellie and, by extension, his broader staff. Nellie loved serving in the Senate on the staff, and she loved the Senator. That is what she called him, "the Senator." And JOHN SARBANES saw Nellie Freeman for who she was. He saw her talent and he unleashed her to interact with the people of Maryland, of which she was a native, to organize events, to organize his participation in festivals and convenings of all kinds. And she just loved this work. He saw the value in it and understood that the connection with human beings is the essence of politics.

He once said that Nellie knew more constituents and more local organizations than anyone else in Maryland. And, you know, I think she is just incredibly proud of that to this day. I know that she shared a camaraderie and an esprit de corps and a joy of working for Senator Paul Sarbanes.

How you treat your staff and how you see your staff says a lot about you as a public servant. Senators have a lot more staff than we do over here in the House, and he really knew his staff and treated them great.

After Senator Sarbanes retired, Nellie went on to work for another Senator, and then she retired. And when she retired, her current employer, the Senator, couldn't attend her retirement party, but Paul Sarbanes did. He showed up and he spoke about Nellie. That is the kind of person he was.

So it is a great loss for Maryland and for our country. And I just want to say to all of his former staff that you all don't get enough appreciation. Our staff doesn't. Senator Sarbanes treated his staff right, and I hope we all can live up to his example.

Mr. TRONE. Mr. LEVIN, I, too, rise today to honor the life and legacy of Maryland Senator Paul Sarbanes.

The magnitude of his loss can be felt throughout Maryland and the country.

Senator Sarbanes spent his entire career fighting for the issues that Marylanders care the most about. He was a champion for justice, authoring the first article of impeachment against a corrupt President. He was a champion for fairness, tackling corporate regulatory reform and ensuring transparency for investors. He was a champion for the environment, spearheading

efforts to protect Maryland's beloved Chesapeake Bay for generations to come.

It is not just his long list of accomplishments that Senator Sarbanes will be remembered for, it is also his dedication to the people. Senator Sarbanes defined what it means to be a public servant. He showed up in the communities that felt left behind. He listened to the concerns of his constituents, and he worked hard to get things done for our State and the country.

That type of leadership is hard to find here in Washington. We can all learn a lot from him. I know I have. My wife, June, and I extend our condolences to the friends and family of Senator Sarbanes, especially to his son, our friend, Congressman JOHN SARBANES.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

A FAREWELL TO CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2019, the gentlewoman from Indiana (Mrs. BROOKS) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. BYRNE), my colleague and wonderful, dear friend.

FAREWELL TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding. My grandparents were from Indiana, and the gentlewoman from Indiana represents her State well, and I have appreciated our relationship.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to give my farewell speech to this House, and I am going to surprise some people by saying that I rise today with hope and optimism. I know that is unusual because there are people on both sides of the House that want to say this country is in a bad place and heading in the wrong direction.

I believe that view ignores two very important things. One is our history, and the other is what I hear the people of America telling us.

Several years ago, a number of us from the Senate and the House, both parties, had the privilege of spending an evening at the Library of Congress with the noted American history writer David McCullough. At the end of the evening, the moderator turned to him and said: What parting words do you have for these Members of Congress?

And he said: I think if the people of America knew their history better, they would be more hopeful, they would be more optimistic.

I have been listening to the people of my district for the last 7 years. When I was listening to them, I had no preconceived notions about what they thought, and, buddy, they told me. And the American people, through elections, have told us, too. And the great thing about our elections is there are no filters.

If you go back and look at the history of this country, you will see some notable things. One is that this country was founded by people who believed in principles, in morals, and values that defined who we are. They took a tremendous risk in fighting the most powerful military nation in the world, Great Britain, and they did it after declaring something very important, not just that they were declaring independence, but the reasons for why they were doing it.

That Congress was the Second Continental Congress. The First Continental Congress, which met in 1774, is the forerunner to this House, a group of people elected to represent the people of this country. It is a notion as old as the creation of Parliament and the House of Commons of England, something that was their heritage.

Now, they took a great risk because they felt they faced a great risk. They had been told when those colonies were founded that they would have the same rights as all English people, and they found after the French and Indian war that that wasn't true, that those rights were going to be taken from them, and they were willing to fight for those rights.

Now, Mr. Speaker, let me say this very clearly. They didn't come into this with clean hands. When the Europeans came to this continent, this was not a new world. This was an old world. There was a civilization already here that had been here for thousands of years. And between our germs, which they had no defense against, and other things worse than that, we essentially took this land from them.

In 1619, European slave traders brought the first slave to this country. So when they went into that fight with the British, they didn't have clean hands. But societies are complex things, and because they didn't have clean hands didn't mean they didn't have clean hearts. And they did.

They waged an incredible war for 5 years against this great military power and won. And they won because of what they stood on. Go back and look at the Declaration of Independence. One sentence in there really says it all: "We hold these truths. . . ."

Truths, absolutes, not something you get to change your mind about.

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal. . . ."

Yes, I know they used the word "men," but the principle of equality was in there. It was in what they were standing on. And they said we were created equal, which means we had a Creator. And they go on in the very next phrase and they say: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator. . . ."

They were gifted. Endowed means gifted. They were gifted by their Creator, by God himself with certain unalienable rights, rights that can't be taken away from them. And that

among these rights are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. And that governments are instituted among men to secure those very liberties, "... deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed."

We need to reread that sentence over and over again. Government doesn't exist for the politicians. Government exists to secure rights, and the power we have is the power the people give us.

Now, I know very well that we had to follow up that desperate war and that declaration by creating a Constitution, the Constitution we are under today. Sadly, it is a Constitution I fear too many people, including too many people in power, don't know much about. Because the purpose of the Constitution was not only to create a government that had enough power to do what needed to be done for the things that are listed in the preamble of the Constitution, it also put limits on that government. And some of us act as if there are no limits on this government.

And our Founders knew because they had to fight against a tyrannical central government that there needed to be limits on government. Those same English rights that they had inherited had been secured because people, for hundreds of years, had to fight back against British kings that wanted to take power and use it against the people.

□ 2015

People lost their lives. There was great suffering, as there was in our Revolution, because tyrannical central governments don't give their power back easily, they don't give them back without a fight. That fight continued in the Constitution.

The Bill of Rights, which was adopted by this House in the very first Congress under the leadership of James Madison, as he said in his speech to the House when he introduced the Bill of Rights, he said, this is all about making sure that we take away from this powerful government we have created any notion that they can trample on certain specific rights, and they laid them out. And in a couple years, all the States necessary ratified those amendments, and they are part of the fundamental law of this country, although sometimes we act like they are not.

I have listened, by the way, to some of the debates about what rights we have under the Free Exercise Clause. The Free Exercise Clause is in the First Amendment to the Constitution, and it says, Congress can't make any law that establishes a religion or infringes upon the free exercise of that religion; exercise, action. We have a right to freely exercise our religion, and we need to remember that fundamental right along with the others.

Now, that was our founding: the Declaration of Independence, the War for Independence, the Constitution, the Bill of Rights. That was our founding,

not 1619. And we need to remember the principles of our founding, because they are central to who we are as people.

Now, over the course of the 19th century, we were invaded by Great Britain, the Capitol Building here was burned, the White House was burned. We could have given up, but we didn't, because that is not who we are.

We not only survived, we fought on and built this great country so that by 1860, we not only bordered on the Atlantic Ocean, we bordered on the Pacific Ocean and we bordered on the Rio Grande. We grew by leaps and bounds.

Then in 1861, we entered another tragedy, because the people that put that Constitution together failed in at least one critical regard: they failed to address the issue of slavery, and we fought a terrible Civil War that cost the lives of 600,000 Americans to solve a problem that should have been solved in 1787.

Despite that war, we came back, we ended slavery, we adopted the Fourteenth Amendment and the Fifteenth Amendment, and we grew as a Nation throughout the rest of the 19th century.

Finally, in the early 20th century, we did the right thing and gave women the right to vote. Neither of my grandmothers, as young adult women with families, could vote. It is amazing that that was true just that long ago, but it was. But we corrected it, as we always do.

In World War II, this country fought an incredibly difficult world war on three different continents and beat the most powerful nations in the world, and at the end of that war, stood as the only real power left on the Earth.

And we had a choice. We could have walked away, come right back to our shores and said, we are going back to being the insular country we have been. We could have also said, we have got more power than everybody else; we are going to use it against everybody else to make ourselves wealthy.

We did neither.

We stood up and led the world, and created a rules-based order that has benefited people all over the world, that has lifted billions of people out of poverty, that has increased the lifespan of billions of people, that spread democracy and freedom around the globe, because that is who we are.

While we were doing that, we were also facing our problems here at home. Yes, we have problems here at home. We didn't finish the work of the Civil War. We had to go through a difficult civil rights movement, and in this House, we adopted the 1964 Civil Rights Act, and in this House, we adopted the 1965 Voting Rights Act. We did that.

We provided things for the education of the children of this country they didn't have. We provided things for healthcare in this country that people didn't have. We provided for clean air and clean water.

We addressed our own problems while we were leading the world, because that is who we are. We do those things.

Now, I understand that there are people that want to give us a different version of that history. They want to tell us that we are all evil from birth, that somehow this country is inherently evil.

That just doesn't square with historic facts.

They want to rewrite history.

The first thing any authoritarian government does is rewrite history or attempt to do it. The authoritarian wannabes in this country are trying to rewrite our history, and they want to do that to pursue a radical agenda that doesn't match up with what the American people want.

They try to call themselves Progressives. That is not progressive. Wanting a powerful central government is regressive. That is regressing back to what we rebelled against in 1776.

They are not progressive. They are Socialists. They are at least honest in saying that. But they are not progressive. It is regressive.

Let me tell you what I hear the American people say in my district and around this country. They are saying this: We Americans aren't evil. We are and have been a force for good here and around the world.

We aren't Socialists. We don't want a powerful, overreaching central government.

We don't want Medicare for all, where the government makes decisions for us and our doctors, and rations when and how we get our healthcare. We believe our healthcare system is the best in the world, and we want to keep it that way, but we also want to assure that everyone in this country has real access to it.

We don't want a Green New Deal, which jacks up our utility bills, saps our economic competitiveness, and destroys jobs.

We don't want to defund the police. In fact, we think spending on public safety is a good thing. We value our law enforcement officers and we grieve when one is killed, as dozens are every year.

We want our government to defend our shores and interests and protect us here at home. We rely upon the men and women wearing our uniform to do that, and we want our government to take care of them.

I have gotten the chance to travel all over the world to see our men and women in uniform, many of them in harm's way, and I am so proud of them. And like most Americans, I want to make sure we are doing the right thing by them.

We want to make sure that there is opportunity in this country for everyone. Everyone. Don't leave anybody out. We want everybody to be able to take advantage of all that this Nation has to offer. And to achieve that goal, we need quality education for everybody in this country, and not just for the privileged.

It shouldn't be the case that you get one caliber of education because of

where you live, one type of education, one quality of education, and a worse one if you live in some other place. We should give everybody the freedom to have quality education so that they can take advantage of those opportunities.

We want justice for everyone. Everyone. Because injustice to anyone is injustice to us all.

We want our air and water to be clean.

We want to continue to be the economic leader of the world.

Let me stop and say a word about China.

The greatest external threat to this country is China; not the Chinese people, but the Communist Party that runs China. They seek to become the only power in the world; not a power, the only power. And they will do anything—anything. They will stop at nothing to get it.

It is past time for us to wake up and understand the threat that they are, not just to us, but to the entire world and that rules-based order we created after World War II.

And, Mr. Speaker, we the American people are tired of being divided, divided by our region. Since when is it okay for the coasts to look down on the other parts of the country?

We don't want to be divided by race. People aren't defined by the color of their skin, they are not defined by their ethnicity, they are not defined by their national origin. That is anti-American to think that way. We should come together over that.

We don't want to be divided by our gender.

We don't want to be divided by religion. Whether you have got a religion or not, we don't want to be divided by it.

We don't want to be divided by generation, the young versus the old. It has always been that the old handed something valuable to the next generation. That is what we should be about.

That division in our country is the greatest internal threat we have got. And I will tell you, Mr. Speaker, it is the greatest threat of all, because there is nothing that this great Nation can't accomplish when we are united, when we are *e pluribus unum*, out of many, one.

That is who America is, that is who the American people want us to be, and that is the great challenge before this House.

I have had a great experience here in Congress. I have met some wonderful people. I have had the privilege of serving on the House Armed Services Committee, the Education and Labor Committee, and the Rules Committee. I have seen a lot of important things be done here and be done right.

The best legislation passed in this House is bipartisan legislation. The worst legislation is almost always partisan legislation. Usually it doesn't make it across the finish line, by the way.

Our ability to work together should be what we should all be striving for in this House, and I hope the House to follow will do that.

Mr. Speaker, before I take my leave, I want to say a few things.

I want to thank the many Members of this House who have befriended me and helped me on both sides of the aisle. I particularly want to thank my fellow colleagues in the Alabama delegation. They have been a great family to be a part of.

I want to thank the staff. The staff of this House is amazing, so very helpful, so very competent, and we just couldn't get our jobs down without you.

I want to thank the good people of southwest Alabama. They gave me the great privilege of being here to represent them as their only representative. What an honor that has been. I hope and pray that I have fulfilled the trust that they put in me, because they are my bosses.

I want to thank my many supporters who time and time again helped me, and sometimes it wasn't so easy to do what they had to do.

I want to thank my office staff here in Washington and the district. They made me look good every day, and I could not have done what I have done without them. So to all of my staff, present and former, thank you for what you have done for me.

And I want to thank my long-suffering family. You know, they have loved me and they supported me, even when I wasn't so lovable and even when it wasn't so easy to support me. I could not have done it without them.

So to my son Patrick, his wife, Carolyn, my grandchildren MacGuire and Ann Roberts; my daughter Kathleen and her husband, Steve, and son, Cooper; my daughter Laura, her husband, Lieutenant Commander Stephen Prugh, now presently at the Pentagon; my son Colin; and most of all, I want to thank my wife, Rebecca.

You know, these are hard positions and it is really hard to be the spouse of somebody in these positions, and Rebecca has done a tremendous job in supporting me in every way you could ask. She is truly the love of my life for 40 years now, and I want to thank her for all that she has done for me in all those 40 years, but particularly these last 7 years.

And now, Mr. Speaker, I say farewell to this House. God bless you all, and God bless the United States of America.

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, that was outstanding.

And to my dear friend and colleague, best to you in retirement and in your next chapter of life. You have an amazing family; you have a passion for our country. Thank you for reminding us all of the great history of this country. And what an amazing country we are both proud to be born in and lucky to be born in. So I wish you well.

Mr. Speaker, fellow Members of Congress, my dedicated staff past and

present, my family and friends, and most importantly to the Hoosiers of the Fifth District of Indiana: I stand before you today at the end of an incredibly challenging year, at the close of a tumultuous decade, and in the final days of my tenure as a Member of this esteemed body.

When I decided to run for Congress in 2011, it was because I wanted to make a difference in my community and my country. I believed that despite the dysfunction that did and does dominate the headlines, I could get things done for my home State of Indiana and my fellow Hoosiers.

Above all, I wanted to restore confidence in Congress, to reassure people that our government can and does do enormous good, that their elected representatives are dedicated public servants who, while still human, wake up each day committed to ensuring a brighter future for every American, where the opportunity to thrive is not limited to some, but afforded to all.

□ 2030

How do you go about rebuilding trust and faith with some 328 million people? We still have a long way to go. Congressional approval ratings continue to hover in the teens and twenties.

But over the course of my 8 years here, I have identified four steps I believe can and will go a long way to restoring public trust and faith in Congress.

The first sounds relatively simple. We just need to do the work. As every Member of this esteemed body knows, in practice, making an idea into an effective law takes careful planning, hours of learning, listening to the experts, deep discussions, debates with constituents, and colleagues across the political spectrum, not to mention actually writing the legislation and earning the votes to get it signed into law by the President.

These days, it seems like ideas we can all get behind are few and far between. Wherever you look, it is hard not to see the deep divisions in our country, along party lines to be sure, but also along racial, socioeconomic, gender, geographic, and religious lines as well.

Following a very contentious election, those divisions are on full display, for better or for worse. It is easy to point out the problems we face, but it is the difficult, humbling work to set aside our differences, to roll up our sleeves, and to focus on finding solutions. My time in Congress has taught me that it is work worth doing.

Some of the most important work that I have been involved in here has been in response to the number of Americans lost to opioid overdoses each day that is still alarmingly high and being pushed higher by the pandemic.

I am especially proud to have been a part of getting a comprehensive piece of legislation passed to work against every facet of the heroin opioid crisis.

From prevention and education, to treatment and recovery, to getting overdose reversal drugs into the hands of first responders, and supporting law enforcement in their fight against illicit drugs, I am even prouder that the legislation that was ultimately signed into law incorporated hundreds of smart solutions and proposals from individual Members of Congress from across the country and the political spectrum.

The Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act epitomizes the way our government can and should work for us. I have worked hard to ensure that I approach each day ready to collaborate, debate, and work alongside my colleagues, regardless of party, and to really address the challenges facing our country.

I believe government's first priority is security, keeping its citizens safe, the people directly responsible for ensuring our security, our brave servicemen and -women. It is impossible to overstate my admiration and gratitude for the difficult work they do, the sacrifices they and their families make for our safety, and their willingness to pay the ultimate price for our freedom.

I was lucky enough to be a part of a delegation led by retiring Members Representatives MARTHA ROBY and SUSAN DAVIS to Afghanistan, Iraq, and Jordan to thank moms for serving away from their families on Mother's Day. These were among the most meaningful moments of my congressional career. They reinforced my belief that Congress' top job is to support our troops and our diplomats, to give them the tools they need to perform their duty and to never forget the sacrifice they have made and will continue to make for our country.

While contentious and difficult, my work on the Select Committee on Benghazi was, at its core, to make sure we do a better job of protecting our diplomats and Americans serving overseas. They deserve to know that we are doing everything in our power to keep them safe while they protect our interests and defend our Nation abroad.

At home, it is our first responders who are on the front lines of ensuring our safety and upholding the rule of law. Because I worked closely with our partners in law enforcement, first as a deputy mayor in Indianapolis and later as U.S. attorney for the Southern District of Indiana, I wanted to be a voice for law enforcement in Congress. I saw their dedication and the sacrifices they and their families make.

There were and are areas where we can make both our citizens and our first responders safer.

Following the Boston Marathon bombing, I worked to help first responders use social media as an effective tool for disaster response. Later, my fellow Hoosiers, Senators YOUNG and DONNELLY, and a bipartisan group of my colleagues in the House led efforts to give first responders critical access to mental health support to

manage the trauma inherent in their day-to-day work.

Today, law enforcement needs our support more than ever, even as we look for ways to ensure our laws are enforced justly and fairly.

Time and time again during my congressional career, we found areas of agreement, no matter how small, where positive change can be made for our fellow citizens. And sometimes we go big. We came together to pass the 21st Century Cures Act led by Representative FRED UPTON and Representative DIANA DEGETTE from Colorado, which speeds up the research, development, and deploying of lifesaving medicines, treatments, and, yes, vaccines.

I joined breast cancer survivor Representative WASSERMAN SCHULTZ to ensure young women can access lifesaving mammograms and detect breast cancer early.

Beyond the big headlines about gridlock and dysfunction, there is good, meaningful work being done on Capitol Hill, but none of it is done alone.

To my beloved friends and family, "thank you" doesn't begin to cover it. You have kept me grounded in purpose, honest and strong. Your unwavering support and love and laughter have made the hard days easier and the happy days more joyful.

My husband, David, and my children, Jessica and Connor, having you by my side every step of the way has made all the difference. I love you very much and couldn't be prouder of all that you have accomplished in the last 8 years.

To the rest of my family and friends at home and across the country, thank you for being my champions, my cheerleaders, and, above all, for walking alongside me even during the difficult parts of this journey. You were the first volunteers for my campaign and you always have my back. I look forward to more time spent with all of you in the months and years to come.

To my dedicated team, past and present, some of whom have been with me since the beginning of this wild ride, I share every accomplishment and every accolade with you. It is hard to find people with whom you can share a passion and a purpose, let alone a few laughs and tears along the way.

From the day I announced my candidacy to the day we turn off the lights, there are countless individuals who have contributed to my work with integrity and grit and who served the Fifth District honorably. We have become a family.

While working side by side, we have celebrated life's great joys—weddings, babies, first grandchildren—and cheered one another on during periods of transition—new jobs, pursuing graduate degrees, first homes, and cross-country moves. And we have grieved together during life's inevitable sorrows, mourning friends and family members taken too soon, including Judy Christofolis, who died this past spring after a long battle with breast cancer.

Through it all, I have been lucky to have been surrounded by smart people who are willing to work late nights and early mornings to crisscross the Fifth District to hear directly from our constituents, to learn and grow alongside, and craft effective legislation that really fixes problems for people.

I am proud of all the work we have done together, and I am looking forward to cheering each of you on during all the exciting twists and turns that are yet to come in your life's journey.

To my colleagues, most of whom I now call friends, particularly the Indiana delegation, my brothers and sister Hoosiers, thank you for your collaboration, your intelligence, your patriotism, and your service. It is a privilege to work with each of you, and I am grateful for all the opportunities we had to tackle big problems together.

I want to especially recognize my esteemed congressional mentors, Representative CATHY MCMORRIS RODGERS, who believed in me and supported me in my very first primary; former Speaker John Boehner, who gave me many opportunities to lead and make a difference; Representative FRED UPTON and Representative GREG WALDEN, who were amazing leaders on the House Energy and Commerce Committee; and to our Republican leadership team, who I have become very close to, Leader KEVIN MCCARTHY, Whip STEVE SCALISE, and Conference Chair LIZ CHENEY.

They approached their difficult jobs with enthusiasm, integrity, and vision. Thank you for your encouragement, counsel, and wisdom, and for all of our staffs.

Finally, to the people of the Fifth District, it has been the great honor of my life to serve as your voice in Congress, your advocate, for the last 8 years.

I would like to especially recognize the young people who participated in my youth advisory groups, the thousands of constituents who visited with me at Connect With Your Congresswoman events, the educators and business leaders who made our Connecting Careers and Classroom events such a success. You make me proud to be a Hoosier.

That brings me to my second step in rebuilding confidence in Congress. We must remain closely connected, more closely than ever before, to our home States, our communities, and the people we represent. The laws we pass in Congress are focused on the national level, but my first priority is and always has been serving the people of the Fifth.

In 8 years, we worked with more than 4,500 constituents to help them navigate government, resolve issues with Federal agencies like the Veterans Administration, Medicare, assist with stalled international adoptions, and even bring terrorists to justice for the murder of a young Hoosier.

We worked with communities to support critical grants and initiatives that are making the Fifth District of Indiana an even greater place to live, work,

and grow. In Anderson, after years of effort, we secured support for the 8th Street Bridge, a critical transportation link downtown.

We commemorated the 50th anniversary of Robert Kennedy's speech following the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. I worked with my fellow Hoosier Representative ANDRÉ CARSON and Senators YOUNG and DONNELLY to establish the Landmark for Peace Memorial in Indianapolis as part of the African American Civil Rights Network.

It was the honor of a lifetime to be with the late civil rights icon and my friend, Representative JOHN LEWIS, in Indiana to celebrate that 50 years of struggle and progress.

And, yes, we grieved with the city of Noblesville following a tragic school shooting, but we honored the heroes, the teachers, the nurses, and the school police officers who saved lives that day.

Yes, the job is difficult. But sometimes, this job is just fun. Whether it is calling a brilliant young Hoosier to tell them they received an appointment to attend a military academy, or whether we have traveled the district and learned how puzzles are made at a factory in Tipton, or we joined Indiana Wesleyan University students in Marion to celebrate three national sports titles and their 100th anniversary.

At Launch Fishers and zWorks in Zionsville, we saw the latest and cutting-edge technology and met entrepreneurs on the cusp of the next great idea.

It wouldn't be a trip home without mentioning the food, whether it was enjoying the waffles after ringing the bell to open the farmers market in my hometown of Carmel or grabbing a bite at the Indiana State Fair Midway.

I can't thank all the farmers enough across the Fifth District for opening their farms to me and helping me understand all the work that goes into providing the food on our tables, both at home and around the world.

I even got to try my hand at a few jobs, like spending a day as a UPS driver in suburban Indianapolis.

But it is the conversations with the young Hoosiers that gave me so much hope. I will never forget visiting the JROTC program at Blackford High School and celebrating Veterans Day with them. The adventures across the district and the warm welcomes I received will stay with me for the rest of my life.

Beyond the job and remaining rooted in our districts, the third way we can restore confidence in Congress is to take a hard look at ourselves in the mirror to ensure that Congress truly embodies the diversity that makes our Nation strong and to commit to a culture of continuous improvement.

When my close friend, Representative JACKIE WALORSKI, who is one of my best friends here—we were elected in 2012—we were the first Republican women to represent the State of Indi-

ana in Washington, D.C., in 50 years. Representative Cecil Harden had come before us.

We joined a small, but mighty, group of women in the House who, despite our political differences, agreed that Congress needed more women. And last year, I took the baton from my dear friends, Representative ELISE STEFANIK and ANN WAGNER before her, and we led Republican efforts to recruit more women and more people of color to run for Congress.

This fall, more Republican women ran and won than ever before. Our work must continue on both sides of the aisle if Congress is to truly reflect the diversity of our country. It is one of the reasons I agreed to co-chair the Bipartisan Women's Caucus with Representative LOIS FRANKEL.

Together, we led efforts to improve access to school around the globe for girls. We worked to recognize the female leaders who came before us, from the 100th anniversary of the first woman to serve in Congress, Jeannette Rankin, to the annual Memorial Day service where we honor our female veterans.

Importantly, we acted on the findings of the Indianapolis Star investigation into sexual abuse of young Olympic hopefuls, to protect young athletes from harm and to ensure that victims have access to justice, and we did so across party lines.

Nowhere was bipartisanship more at work, though, than during my service, first as a Member and then as chairwoman of the House Ethics Committee. Holding that gavel not only made me the first Hoosier woman to chair a congressional committee, but it was an unprecedented opportunity to ensure transparency, accountability, access, and justice in Congress. Little did I know that I would preside over the committee at the same time that the #MeToo movement shone a light on the pervasive problem of sexual harassment in our society and in our government.

Like many of you, my good friend and the ranking member TED DEUTCH and I were shocked to learn that millions of dollars in settlements had been paid by Congress to victims of sexual assault. Over the next year, a bipartisan group of Members worked to reform the Congressional Accountability Act to make it easier for victims to report sexual harassment and to make sure that financial settlements aren't paid by Members of Congress and that they must be disclosed to the public.

There is still so much work to be done, but I have to tell you, at the end of my service here in Congress, the Select Committee on the Modernization of Congress gives me much hope. I have been a proud member of that committee. We recently published 97 bipartisan recommendations focused on making Congress work more efficiently and transparently and to be more responsive and accessible to the American people.

A quarter of our recommendations have already been enacted, and I hope the rest will soon follow, because if we are to debate 21st century issues, we must bring our policies, technology, staff, and communications into the modern age.

So, I strongly encourage and urge my colleagues and the new Members of Congress to first read our report and then take up the select committee's recommendations and continue the hard work. I want to thank Representatives KILMER and GRAVES for their leadership.

That brings me to my fourth and final step of rebuilding trust and faith in Congress: ensuring we are looking ahead, beyond the most pressing challenges of today, to those on the horizon.

Following the recession in 2009, many Americans were out of work. Still more were underemployed. Our economy was and is moving quickly to Industry 5.0 where careers in tech, connected devices, and AI become the norm.

□ 2045

If we aren't careful, this future will leave many of our fellow citizens behind.

To that end, we have passed legislation to improve training and workforce programs to retrain and deploy Americans who are out of work, to expand 5G networks and rural broadband so more people can participate in this industrial revolution and provide clear guardrails for the technology industry to continue its rapid growth, while offering better protection for our personal information, preventing cyber threats and attacks.

Our world is changing fast, and Congress must keep up. When former Representative MIKE ROGERS approached me about continuing his work to strengthen our national biodefense, I knew it was important work.

Alongside my incredible partner who became a very dear friend, Representative ANNA ESHOO and I began engaging again in the biodefense efforts that have been going on since the early 2000s, the reauthorization of the Pandemic and All-Hazards Preparedness Act. It was signed into law in 2019.

This legislation represents years of bipartisan collaboration and thoughtful input from medical and public health preparedness and response leaders. It helped bolster our response to natural disasters and chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear threats.

When it was passed, I thought the greatest threats we faced were from terrorist organizations like ISIS using chemical or biological weapons in their attack, which are still a significant concern today. But little did I realize that our Nation—our world—was on the verge of a pandemic that would grind business, travel, and life as we knew it to a halt.

I am glad we passed PAHPA when we did, and I know we must do better in

the future. When the next novel virus or biological unforeseen event occurs, Americans will expect more from this institution. We can learn from our successes and failures over the last 9 months and in the months to come as we look toward a COVID-19 vaccine and, ultimately, a return to our normal pace of life. We know some things will never be the same.

Change must happen in our country to make good on our founding promise that all people are created equal and that our rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness are protected. How we do that is a matter great debate playing out in our streets in protests, on social media, around dinner tables, and in headlines.

It seems like there is no good solution and no way forward. It is up to us—to every American—to forge a path together and to mend the fissures that are breaking apart our Nation and our democracy.

I have spent the last 8 years engaged in this work day in and day out. It is work I will continue for the rest of my life because the truth is we have far more in common than we don't.

We are up to this task. I believe in the American spirit, in the power of our ingenuity, and in the strength of our resolve.

We will get through these difficult days. This pandemic will end. We will get Americans and businesses back to work and school.

We will overcome the scourge of racism and prejudice.

We will restore trust and confidence in our government and in Congress.

We will once again see this Chamber full of big ideas aimed at ensuring the American Dream is within reach for everyone.

I thank you, Mr. Speaker, for the very last time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

AMERICAN REPRESENTATIVE DEMOCRACY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2019, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LIPINSKI) for 30 minutes.

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, when I was a professor teaching American Government before I was elected to Congress, the first thing I would do when beginning to teach a class about Congress and the legislative process would be to show this video. It is the 3-minute "Schoolhouse Rock" cartoon video from the 1970s called "I'm Just a Bill."

The cartoon begins with a group of constituents calling their Congressman with an idea for a new law. The Congressman introduces a bill, which goes through House committee debate and amendment before a vote to report the bill favorably to the House floor.

On the floor, the bill goes through debate and amendment before a majority vote that sends the bill over to the Senate, where the process continues.

This is a process that we call regular order. Regular order in the House is a standard way of legislating that facilitates extensive participation of Members in the deliberative, consensus-based decisionmaking process.

More importantly, this is how the Framers of the Constitution not only intended the House to work, but believed that the House needed to work if the United States, then in its infancy, was to succeed.

Congress was created in Article I of the Constitution because the legislative branch, being closest to the people, was necessarily the linchpin of American representative democracy.

While the Framers didn't include in the Constitution the rules by which the House and Senate would operate, they understood that the way in which the lawmaking process was conducted was critical to the creation of laws that were good for the Nation as a whole and to the legitimacy of Congress and those laws.

James Madison, oftentimes called the Father of Congress, believed it was essential that the legislative branch make policy in the manner that well represented the vast and varied Republic and best served the Nation as a whole.

Remember, our Nation began as a unique experiment in self-governance. There was great doubt about whether the views of people so diverse could successfully be forged into good policy that served such a large nation.

Madison believed that the way to do this was for Members of Congress to represent the multiple and diverse interests and ideas of their constituents in an open marketplace of ideas in Congress. Through the legislative process, the people's Representatives would debate, deliberate, and put together a consensus on legislation that served the common good of the Nation.

What the Constitution created was not a parliamentary system, because the Framers did not intend to empower temporary majorities. Instead, they wanted to compel compromise in a diverse society.

The exercise of power was shared so that all American voters had an opportunity to be heard in the lawmaking process and to ensure that only the will of broad, durable majorities could be acted upon. Especially because America was a large and diverse country whose unity needed to be nurtured, it was critical that the legislative process worked this way so that the American people saw Congress as an institution that truly represented them and saw American law as legitimate.

But today, the House doesn't often work this way, especially when we deal with issues that are of the greatest importance to our Nation. Those bills, when they get considered, don't get shaped through an open process in committee and on the House floor. Each Member doesn't have the opportunity to represent their constituents by bringing their ideas and interests in

the legislative process where debate, deliberation, and compromise produce the best policy for our Nation. Instead, the process runs through the Speaker's Office, where the content of legislation is shaped to get enough votes just out of the majority to pass something that pleases various partisans.

Now, before I go any further, I want to make clear that this is not a criticism of the current Speaker or any former Speaker. This is a problem of our institution.

So how did we get here?

Well, there has been a big change in the way Washington reacts every 2 years after a congressional election. It used to be the case that, when election results came in, everyone looked to see which party has the majority in the House, who has the majority in the Senate and whether it had 60 votes to overcome a filibuster, and which party held the White House.

Understanding that balance of power and the issues facing our Nation over the next 2 years, Members of Congress would get to work figuring out what issues they may be able to come to an agreement on and get passed into law over the next 20 months or so before the next campaign cycle began.

Now, today, what happens is, after understanding the balance of power in Washington after an election, each party retreats to its corner and begins plotting what their party is going to do over the next 2 years.

If there is unified government—that is, one party has majorities in both Chambers of Congress and the Presidency—here in the House, the Speaker will consider the priorities of the party and decide what issues to make their legislative priorities over the next 2 years to create party-preferred laws and keep that majority.

If there is divided government, which is the norm, having occurred 30 out of the last 40 years, and if you include the filibuster, 39½ out of the last 40 years, if that is the case, the Speaker plans what the party can do over the next 2 years to help the party gain unified control of the government with the hope of them passing all of the party's preferred policies. On the other side of the aisle, they figure out what they can do over those 2 years so they can get control.

In order to help the party carry out this biennial plan, Members of Congress have given up much of their power to represent their constituents in the legislative process to party leaders.

So what has this led to?

Gridlock. There are so many issues we need to address in this Nation and we fail to act: healthcare costs, the Federal debt, immigration, climate change, the economic and military threat of China, Social Security and Medicare finances, transportation infrastructure, the continuing decline of good working-class jobs, and reforming the War Powers Act.

These are just some of the major issues which Congress has been failing